



Attorney General Jon Bruning

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Former National Guard Employee Pleads Guilty to Theft**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced that former National Guard employee Antrina Berks, 46, of Lincoln pleaded guilty to one count of theft by unlawful taking, and one count of theft by deception.

In February 2008, a Nebraska State Patrol investigation found that Berks, as a civilian employee with the Nebraska National Guard, made \$39,092 in unauthorized refund requests on the Nebraska National Guard's postage meter accounts between August 2005 and May 2006. These refund checks were illegally endorsed by Berks and deposited into an unauthorized joint account in the name of Berks and the Nebraska National Guard. Berks was charged with felony theft by unlawful taking and pleaded guilty.

"Ms. Berks stole from those who work every day to protect us," said Bruning. "What she did was wrong, and she'll suffer the consequences."

The investigation also revealed other checks illegally signed by Berks and payable to the National Guard between March and May of 2006, totaling around \$700. Berks deposited these checks into the same joint account. She then wrote checks on the joint account for her personal expenses. Berks was also charged with seven counts of forgery for the checks. Those charges were dismissed as part of the plea agreement. The theft by unlawful taking charge covers the illegally endorsed checks.

Berks also pleaded guilty to felony theft by deception for illegally obtaining \$12,756 in housing assistance from the Lincoln Housing Authority from May 2005 to April 2007. Berks didn't report her civilian employee income to the Lincoln Housing Authority. Her combined income as a civilian employee and a guardsman of the Nebraska National Guard would have made her ineligible for assistance.

Theft by unlawful taking is a class III felony. The penalty is one to 20 years in prison, a \$25,000 fine or both. Theft by deception is a class IV felony. The penalty is up to five years in prison, a \$10,000 or both. Berks' sentencing is Feb. 25 at 10:30 a.m. in Lancaster County Court.

Assistant Attorneys General Doug Warner and Stacy Foust are handling the case.

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